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**Fire Service Professional Development Summit**  
Recognition of Community College Presidents

STOW – The Department of Fire Services today hosted the second *Fire Service Professional Development Summit* where Superintendent of the National Fire Academy Dr. Denis Onieal presented certificates of recognition to the representatives of four Massachusetts colleges for their adoption of the nationally recognized *Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education* (FESHE) model curriculum for fire science majors. The four colleges being honored are Anna Maria College and Bunker Hill, Mount Wachusett and Quinsigamond Community Colleges.

Dr. Onieal said, “The national challenge is for state and local providers of training, education, and certification to integrate their activities to eliminate these duplications while enhancing the overall professional development of the fire and emergency services.”

David Cedrone, Associate Commissioner of Economic and Workforce Development said, “We are very proud that these are the first community colleges in the country to be recognized for adopting the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education’s core – curriculum model leading to a National Fire Certificate of Completion.”

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan said, “Massachusetts has taken the lead in working to integrate the training that the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy provides with the education colleges provide. This helps to eliminate duplication of training and education efforts while enhancing the overall professional development of the fire service.”

“Our new affiliation with the National Fire Academy’s FESHE program aligns our college with national standards and provides students with a solid foundation of knowledge from a standardized curriculum that will enhance their capabilities as firefighting professionals,” said Mount Wachusett Community College President Daniel M. Asquino. “We are delighted to be among the first colleges to receive this distinction,” he added.

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The model FESHE curriculum, developed by the National Fire Academy, allows state fire training directors to work with colleges so that college credit can be received for fire training courses and that college courses can be accepted by training directors. Working together they can create a clear path for advancement in the fire service. Edmund Walker, director of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy said, “The goal of the summit is to build on the successful collaboration between the Mass. Firefighting Academy and these four colleges and expand the program to additional colleges.” Colleges from around the state participated in the summit to hear how the FESHE model curriculum has been implemented in Massachusetts and discuss how it could be expanded to additional schools.

For the American fire service, there is no single, national system of fire and emergency services professional development; rather, there are 50 state systems of professional development. Relationships between training, certification, and higher education providers vary from state-to-state where levels of cooperation between and among them range from fully integrated to nonexistent.

State Fire Marshal Coan said, “The goal is that firefighters and fire officers, armed with knowledge and a college degree, can more effectively reduce the human and economic impact of fires in their communities.”